

# State Bar of California, Office of Governmental Affairs

## *The Sacramento Scene*

Vol. 1, No. 6

February 8, 2002

### **SPEAKER WESSON**

On Wednesday, February 6, [Herb Wesson](#) (D. Culver City/Los Angeles) became the Assembly's 65<sup>th</sup> Speaker. Mr. Wesson is the Assembly's sixth Speaker in seven years, and the third Speaker in a row from Los Angeles. A former Pop Warner youth football league coach for many years, Wesson stressed the importance of never quitting and believing in yourself. The swearing-in ceremony on the Assembly Floor was attended by Governor Davis and several former Democrat and Republican speakers, and was the centerpiece of a week of festive events focused on Wesson's ascension to the speakership.

### **NEW ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

On March 11, 2002, [Darrell Steinberg](#) (D. Sacramento) will become the new chair of the Appropriations Committee, which hears all bills that would spend state money. [Ellen Corbett](#) (D. San Leandro/Hayward) will supplant Steinberg as chair of the Assembly Judiciary Committee. [Jerome Horton](#) (D. Inglewood/Los Angeles) will chair the Government Organization Committee. [Joe Nation](#) (D. San Rafael/Petaluma) will chair the Rules Committee. And [Jenny Oropeza](#) (D. Long Beach) will chair the Budget Committee.

### **NEW ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEES**

In addition to appointing new committee chairs, Speaker Wesson announced the creation of two new Assembly standing committees: (1) The Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism and Internet Media., which will be chaired by [Rebecca Cohn](#)

(D. Silicon Valley); and (2) the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

### **WORKERS' COMPENSATION BILL TO GOVERNOR**

A major bill to increase workers compensation benefits and implement employer-sought reforms in the workers' compensation system is on the Governor's desk awaiting signature. Earlier this week [AB 749 \(Calderon\)](#) passed the Senate 23-14, and then the Assembly 45-29, shortcutting much of the usual committee process along the way. The bill reportedly embodies an agreement between the author, state Senate President pro Tem [John Burton](#), and Governor Davis after years of contention. The new law would be effective January 1, 2003.

### **BILL INTRODUCTIONS SLOW**

Following tradition, the first week following the deadline for carryover bills to clear their house of origin was relatively slow in terms of bill introductions. Only 82 bills were introduced during the week, bringing the total of [bills introduced](#) for the year to 392. The deadline for introducing bills in 2002 is Friday, February 22..

### **HEARINGS COMING UP**

The Assembly Judiciary Committee will hold an informational hearing on Tuesday, February 12, on the subject of "Arbitration in Consumer Disputes: A Focus on the Providers." The hearing begins at 8:30 a.m. in Room 4202 of the Capitol. At 1:30 the same day (Room 2040), the Senate Revenue & Taxation Committee will hear [AB 1122 \(Corbett\)](#), a federal conformity measure that would take effect immediately if passed.